(a) whether Government is aware that the India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, that is being worked on by the two Governments, would open the floodgates to Japan's municipal, medical and hazardous wastes in the country;

(b) whether Government is also aware that Japan exported at least 270 tonnes of toxic waste, including prohibited items such as zinc ash, lead acid battery wastes and copper cables coated with the plastic poison PVC, to India; and

(c) if so, the details of countries exporting hazardous waste to India and what has been done by his Ministry to address the environmental concerns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) India-Japan negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) are not completed as on date. One of the fields identified for cooperation under the proposed Agreement is environment. Ministry of Environment & Forests has notified the Hazardous Wastes (Management, Handling and Trans-boundary Movement) Rules, 2008 and Biomedical (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998, wherein imports of hazardous waste/biomedical waste for the purpose of disposal are not permitted.

(b) and (c) As per the provisions laid down in the relevant regulations, imports of certain hazardous wastes, such as zinc ash, insulated copper wire scrap / copper with PVC sheathing including ISRI-code material, are permitted only for the purpose of recycling by such recycling facilities as are registered with the Central Pollution Control Board and are having environmentally sound technologies so as to address the environmental concerns.

Projects under JNNURM in Nagaland

*92. SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) that have been received from the State of Nagaland, so far;

(b) the number of projects that have been approved, so far;

(c) the grant/Central assistance that has since been disbursed, project-wise;

(d) whether CPWD has raised technical objections to the project relating to the construction of a shopping complex with parking at Sewak, whereas similar project at Mokokchung prepared by the same agency was approved by the CPWD without any objections; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) So, far 11 Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) have been received from State Government of Nagaland for consideration under Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) component of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).

(b) One project titled "Roads and Transportation Project, Kohima" has been approved on 26.10.2007 for a total cost of Rs.25.26 crore.

(c) The Additional Central Assistance (ACA) committed is Rs.22.73 crore. Out of this, the first installment amounting to Rs.5.62 crore was released in two parts *i.e.* Rs.1.79 crore on 20.12.2007 and the balance on 1.10.2008.

(d) and (e) The projects referred to were posed under "10% lump sum provision for North Eastern States including Sikkim", and not under JNNURM. The project at Mokokchung was received. CPWD pointed out deficiencies which were later corrected and the project therefore was ultimately approved. In the case of the project at Sewak deficiencies have been pointed out by CPWD. However, it is still under process as a response is yet to be received from the State Government.

Reduction of urban poverty

*93. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of reduction of urban poverty has been far lower than that of rural poverty;

(b) if so, the comparative details thereof during the last four years and the reasons therefor, especially in coastal and agency areas of Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the steps Government would like to take in future in this regard especially to remove the poverty among SCs/STs by uplifting them in the society?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) The Planning Commission brings out estimates of rural and urban poverty from time to time based on survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). According to an estimate released by the Planning Commission based on the 61st Round of NSSO Survey, the percentage of urban poor in the country decreased by 6.7 points between 1993-94 and 2004-05 *i.e.* from 32.4 per cent in 1993-94 to 25.7 percent in 2004-05. During the same period, the percentage of rural poor went down by 9 points, *i.e.* from 37.3 per cent in 1993-94 to 28.3 per cent in 2004-05.

(b) The latest comparative data on rural and urban poverty released by the Planning Commission pertain to the year 2004-05. It reveals that the number of urban poor in India increased from 763.37 million in 1993-94 to 807.96 in 2004-05. Over the same period, the number of rural poor decreased from 2440.31 million to 2209.24 million.

In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the number of urban poor decreased from 74.47 lakhs in 1993-94 to 61.40 lakhs in 2004-05. Over the same period the number of rural poor decreased from 79.47 lakhs to 64.70 lakhs. The figures released by the Planning Commission for Andhra Pradesh pertain to the State as a whole and do not include break-ups for coastal and agency areas.

The reasons for high incidence of urban poverty include several factors such as migration of rural poor to cities and towns in search of jobs; lack of security of tenure, affordable housing and basic amenities to a large segment of the urban population; high cost of living in cities and towns, especially for housing, health care, education and transportation; low wage and lack of job security in the urban informal sector which engages a vast segment of the urban poor population; and lack of appropriate skills with the urban poor to meet the demands of changing urban economies etc.

(c) The Government is addressing the issues of urban poverty, including those relating to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, through the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY).